IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 7 that begins on line 7 and ends on line 13 with the following paragraph:

The media gateways 18 and 19 are controlled from a switching apparatus 20 which in turn is in connection with the SS7 network 22. Included in the switching apparatus 20 may be any number of call/media control computers which are configured to ~~received~~ receive and transmit data signals relating to the processing of voice and data information at the media gateways. These media control computer are known as call agents and in the context of the invention described herein may provide class 4 and class 5 switching services. Control signals for directing operations of the media gateway 18 may be transmitted through data network 16.

Please replace the paragraph on page 9 that begins on line 5 and ends on line 10 with the following paragraph:

Signals between matched pairs of STPs are typically carried over B-links 54. In the system described herein, B-links may be operated at 1.5Mbps. Communications between matched pairs of STPs ~~38 and 40~~ 34 and 36, and 42 and 44, are typically handled over a C-link. Finally, communications between STPs 42 and 44 and switch 20 are provisioned over a logical A-link 58 which may be provided by any number of different types of networks. These networks will be described in greater detail below.

Please replace the paragraph that beings on page 10, line 10 and ends on page 11, line 2 with the following paragraph:

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According to the signaling gateway system described herein, the interface between the switch 20 and the SS7 STP mated pair ~~38 and 40~~ 34 and 36, may be modified by incorporating a new STP pair 42 and 44 into the gateway as the front end for interconnection to the existing SS7 signaling network. With this configuration, instead of A-links being employed to connect the SS7 network to the SSPs, the system described herein will use high speed SS7 B-links from STP pair 42 and 44 to connect to the existing STP pair 34 and 36 in the signaling network. The signaling connections to the call/media control computer within the switch 20 may be provided by redundant local area network (LAN) and wide area network (WAN) data communications equipment and methods. The STP pair 42 and 44 will supply SS7 signaling messages to the switch over these data communications paths using various SS7 over Internet protocol techniques. In essence, the message exchanges between the STP pairs 42 and 44 and the switch 20 will function as "logical" A-links in the SS7 context. The system described herein provides a common fault tolerant infrastructure to network via call/media control computer within the switch, to interface to the existing SS7 network of the PSTN and connect to the media gateway over the packet network.